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WOMEN ON THE FOOD FRONT

Broadcast by Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, H. W. Hochbaum, Extension Service, and Wallace Kadderly, Radio Service, Tuesday, March 2, 1943, in the Department of Agriculture's portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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ANNOUNCER: In Washington, here are . . .

KADDERLY: Wallace Kadderly . . . .

VAN DEMAN: Ruth Van Deman . . . .

KADDERLY: And H. W. Hochbaum of the Extension Service to talk about the nation-wide roll call of rural women to join in the Victory Home Food Supply program that started yesterday under the leadership of State and county home demonstration agents . . . and will be going on until March 20.

VAN DEMAN: Mr. Hochbaum, how many rural women will answer the Home Food Supply roll call?

HOCHBAUM: Just as many as possibly can do so. There are 12 million rural families in the United States . . . 6 million on farms; 6 million in small towns and villages. The need is so great that we hope one woman from every family will enroll.

KADDERLY: Well, American women--rural or urban--have a pretty good record for putting their shoulders to the wheel when they're needed.

HOCHBAUM: That's why the goal should be set high . . .

VAN DEMAN: Would high be around a ton of food for each member of the family?

HOCHBAUM: That's the goal that'll probably be suggested by the neighborhood leaders who are now visiting rural women to take enrollments.

KADDERLY: A few States had Home Food Supply programs going even before the war.

HOCHBAUM: Yes. The object was to make rural families more self sufficient . . . and family meals more nutritious.

VAN DEMAN: Tennessee, I know, did a wonderful job. They began in 1940 with an enrollment of about 61,000 farm families . . . and more and more people joined in as time went on . . . Last year, Tennessee had over 200,000 rural families enrolled in that program.

I remember a local harvest dinner they had in one Tennessee county. Everything served was grown in the community except salt, ginger, soda, and baking powder.

Altogether, 185 different items of food, grown right in their own county. They even made the candles that lighted the table.

HOCHBAUM: That county program demonstrated in a striking way what can be done to

make rural families self sufficient.

A lot of people just assume that folks who live in the country have the place running over with food -- big flocks of chickens, hogs, plenty of milk and butter, and a fine garden. Some of them do have these things, but when you get down to cases, thousands of rural families don't have much of a home garden or a chicken on the place.

KADDERLY: The figures for the value of the products used by the family that come from the home farm will bear you out on that . . . it's something less than $200.00 a year.

HOCHBAUM: To be exact, $194,00. That's only $16.00 a month. Growing more food at home will improve this situation by making the family more self sufficient, and it will also help safeguard the family health in the face of shortages of commercial foods.

VAN DEMAN: Let's run over what women will accomplish for the war effort by enrolling in the Home Food Program when the neighborhood leader comes to talk it over . . . .

HOCHBAUM: It's an opportunity to make a real contribution to our total food production goals. If our 30 million farm people will produce only three-fourths of their own food this year, it will mean more than 22 million tons. And if our people living in small towns and villages would produce only one-fourth of their own needs, it would mean another 8 million tons of food.

KADDERLY: 30 million tons of food. When we deal in such big figures, though, it's sometimes hard for one family to see that what it does in the way of production makes any big difference to this nation. But it does.

HOCHBAUM: Have you been in a grocery store since rationing of canned food started?

KADDERLY: No . . .

HOCHBAUM: It's an eye-opening experience. When I saw what it would cost in point values to buy just one No. 2 can of tomatoes, I figured out what I could do for myself if I grew only 15 tomato plants this year.

KADDERLY: Now, that's what I call being a practical Victory gardener.

HOCHBAUM: A fair yield from 15 plants would give me plenty to eat fresh and about 30 quarts canned. Now, if I had to go to the store and buy the equivalent of those home-canned tomatoes, they'd amount to about fifty No. 2 cans. Each can has a point value of 16. Figure it out . . . That's 800 points. I'm allowed 48 points a month, so at the present rationing value, I'd have about a year-and-a-half's supply from my 15 tomato plants.

VAN DEMAN: All your points for a year and a half. And that's figuring only tomatoes from your Victory Garden.

KADDERLY: Well, it all adds up to this. There's a serious need to stretch the national food supply by producing every mouthful of food we possibly can for home use.

HOCHBAUM: That's how it strikes me. And with the present manpower situation, the

burden of a nationwide Victory Home Food Supply program is bound to fall on women. The enrollment card or blank which the neighborhood leaders are taking around have places for women to check subjects they'd like information on . . . gardening home canning, and so on. The State or county home demonstration agent will then send them this information.

VAN DEMAN: Women who enroll won't be asked to do a lot of new or unusual things . . . the effort will concentrate on more of the familiar things like vegetables from Victory gardens . . . milk, meat . . . eggs, poultry.

HOCHBAUM: Those will be the principal things; though, of course each State will have plans suited to its own conditions. For example, Californians are planning to raise thousands of rabbits for meat.

Now, I know rural women have more than they can do already. So, one of the big questions about participation in the Victory Home Food Supply Program is where the time is coming from to get the job done. The only answer I can see is adjusting home work plans to allow more time. Miss Van Deman, have you any ideas on how to do this?

VAN DEMAN: Yes, let me give you ideas farm women are using. For example, there's a farm woman in Connecticut who saves time in her family of eleven by cutting out all the frills in cooking and serving meals. Instead of putting food on the table in serving dishes, she serves it on plates right from the stove. That way she cuts out many extra motions and saves dishwashing. Also, she says it's a grand way to keep food hot for second helpings.

Then, there's a Nebraska farm woman who irons from the line. She says few women realize how much time they lose by letting clothes get completely dry, then sprinkling, folding and ironing the next day. She plans her work so she can watch the clothes on the line. When they're just dry enough, down they come, and then on to the ironing board.

HOCHBAUM: That's just the type of adjustment that's needed to provide more time to grow food this year.

VAN DEMAN: And, as you well know, Mr. Hochbaum, the farm and rural women will make those adjustments. When the Extension Service neighborhood leaders call on them, they will find women ready and waiting. For these women know that a good home food supply is truly a Victory food supply.

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